

# Senate committee wants seal save cod

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FIRST POSTED: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2012 04:54 PM EDT | UPDATED: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2012



A grey seal mother and pup lie on the snow in Hay Island, Nova Scotia, February 24, 2012. (REUTERS/Paul Darrow )

OTTAWA — A Senate committee wants to put some seal in your meal as part of a kill program to save

The committee acknowledges the "ecological, political and economic" risks that come with culling 70,000 seals over four years in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence, but says it's the best way to preserve dwindling grou

The fisheries and oceans committee held hearings over several months and listened to many witnesses who spoke of thinning out herds.

"Our committee believes a targeted removal program of grey seals is necessary at this time to preserve stocks," Sen. Elizabeth Hubley of P.E.I. said.

Among its recommendations, the committee calls on Health Canada to promote the cardiovascular and fatty acid-rich seal oil and explore the idea of including seal oil in the next version of the Canada Food Guide.

It also wants monitors on hand to ensure seals are dispatched in a humane way.

Not everyone is on board with the committee's plan.

Liberal Sen. Mac Harb of Ottawa said his committee colleagues are wrongly blaming "marine mammal deaths" on cod.

He said overfishing is to blame and that cod stocks are on the rise despite an increase in seal population in the cull area.

"Science in this country will be once again put on the back burner as political games are played with management policies," he said.

"And the domestic and international outcry will further erode Canada's reputation as a responsible steward of the oceans," he said about those in Canada and Europe opposed to seal hunts, seal food and seal apparel.

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## POLL

Do you think a seal cull is a good idea?

- Yes, we need to control the seal population.
- No, killing them is wrong.
- Maybe, if it necessary.

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